



¶ By the King.

¶ A Proclamation for the well ordering of the
Silke Trade, throughout England, &c.



Hereas vpon discouery of some notable abuses in the false dying of Silke, which had crept in vpon the Trade, by the fraud and conuize of some ill disposed persons; whereby besides the inuolunt increase of the weights, the Silke was weakened and corrupted, and the colour made worse, to the great abuse of Vs and our subjects, and to the apparant ouerthrow of the whole Trade, if the same should not haue beene prevented: wee taking into Our Princely consideration the many benefits that doe redound to Our louing subjects, by the importation of raw Silke from forraigne parts, and working the same into Manufactures heere at home, whereby multitudes of Our poore people are dayly set on worke and maintained, though to Our owne losse; did heretofore by Our publique Proclamation given at Our Court at Farnham, the ninth day of August in the sixth yeece of Our reigne, vtterly forbid the vse of all such deceit, and falsitie in the dying of Silkes, and for the present did thereby prescribe some rules to be obserued, for the preventing of the like abuses thereafter, vntill vpon serious and mature deliberation by the aduice of Our Councell, wee should bee able to make a more absolute reformation.

And whereas, wee finding by experience vpon other Trades, that this so great and good a worke was not thoroughly and perfectly to bee done and performed by any other way, then by a Corporation to consist of those persons and members thereof, who hauing knowledge in the seuerall Trades or Mysteries of working, and dying of Silke, could best take timely notice of and discover the seuerall deceits and abuses, which otherwise would from time to time be attempted, and vled therein vpon mature consideration, did thereunto incline as vnto the way tending to the increase of the said Trade, and maintaining the estimation thereof (which wee much desire,) And thereupon by Our Letters Patents, bearing date at Westminster, the twentieth day of May last did constitute, ordaine and declare, that the persons therein named, being persons vsing the Trade of buying, selling and working of Silke, Gold, and Siluer threed, and the seuerall Manufactures thereof, and their successors should for euer hereafter be one bodie politique, and corporate by the

name of the Governour and Company of Silkmen of London, for the well ordering of the Silke Trade, throughout the Kingdome of England, thereby giuing them full power and authoritie, to make, ordeine, and establish all, or any such Lawes, Statutes, Acts, Orders, Constitutions and ordinances, for the good gouernment, order and rule of the said Governour and Company, and euery or any of them; As also all and singular other subjects of Us, Our heires and Successors, residing within Our Kingdomes of England, Ireland, and Dominton of Wales, and intermedling with, or in any wise vsing or exercising the Art, Trade, or Myserie of a Silke-man selling, or working of Silke, gold, or siluer threed, or Manufactures made of them, euery, or any of them, as to them should seeme meet and conuenient, for the taking away, punishing and preventing all present and future abuses, that then had or at any time then after, should or might arise or grow vpon the said Trade, in the throwing, twisting, dying, mixing, weaving, working or selling of Silke, or Silke wares, or Gold, or Siluer threed, or in the seuerall Manufactures made of them, euery or any of them; and also all other abuses whatsoever, from time to time growing or arising vpon the said Silke Trade. And the same Statutes, Lawes, Acts, Orders, Constitutions and Ordinances so had and made, to put in vse and execution accordingly, and at their pleasure to reuoke, repeale and dissolue the same, or any of them: Which Letters Patents we were the rather enclined to grant, for that we reposed speciall trust and confidence in those of the said Company, for the well ordering of the said Trade, and taking away the abuses bled therein.

And whereas at the time of the publishing of the foresaid Proclamation, because it was then conceiued these nine colours, viz. Liuer colour, Deroi, Tawnie, Purple, French greene, Gingerline, Deere colour, Orange colour or light Russet, could not bee dyed without some increase of weight more then other colours, and thereupon more allowances of weight and remedie, were thereby prescribed to those colours, then to all others.

And forasmuch, as it hath lately appeared vnto Us, by the humble Petition of the Governour, and Company of Silke-men aforesaid, that vpon seuerall sollemne debates and tryals, by them made, foure of those colours, viz. French greene, Gingerline, Deere colour, and Orange colour may be dyed, without any encrease of weight other then all other colours haue, And the rest, viz. Light Russet, Liuer colour, Deroi, Tawnie, and Purple, without so much encrease as was thereby allowed, and that a certaine weight as was then set, cannot safely bee continued vpon any of those colours, in regard some Silkes will be boyled downe to twelue Dunces, and others but to twelue Dunces and a halfe, or neere thirteene Dunces, and yet by colour thereof, not onely those colours, but a multitude of others vnder their names, may be dyed vnto thirteene Dunces and a halfe, and thereby neere an Dunce in euery pound vnjustly gained; and that thereupon the said Governour, and Company according to the power giuen vnto them, by Our said Charter, haue the second day of August last made an Ordinance, That whatsoever Silke should bee found, to bee thereafter heavy dyed, either by not being fully discharged of the Gumme or increased in the weight, by the ingredients in the dying, aboue the true nature of the Silke it selfe, and what the best and lightest Dye must necessarily adde to make the colour good, firme, and beautifull, that all such Silke so dyed aboue the true nature thereof, wheresoener the same should bee found, should, and must be burned and destroyed; which they first published

their generall Court, and after sent for the Silke Dyers and their Journey men, and haue caused the same to bee openly read vnto them; yet in regard of the certaine weights, set by the said former Proclamation vpon dying of the said Colours, many of them feare not to disobey the said ordinance though the same were made by men expert in that trade vpon sundrie trialls first had, and for preventing of the said abuses and wrong done to our people thereby, without a due obseruance of which, and all other the good ordinances and orders from time to time to bee made, the reformation which hath bene desired and intended cannot bee effected: And therefore humbly prayed that out of Our tender care of the good prosperitie of our said people in the Trade, & that the said Gouvernour and Companie may bee moze readily obeyed in all places and in all the wales of the reformation as occasion should from time to time require. We by our Royall Proclamation would be pleased to declare that we haue reposed speciall confidence in the care and industrie of the said Gouvernour and Company, and to command obedience and assistance therein and thereunto from all persons whom it may any way concerne, according to the tenor and true meaning of our said Charter.

Now to the end that none of our louing Subjects may pretend ignorance of Our Royall Pleasure in that behalfe, but that what wee haue prohibited and commanded by our said Charter or by Our former Proclamation may be fully knowne and published and accordingly obserued and obeyed, wee doe therefore hereby streightly charge and command that no Silke-dyer doe at any time hereafter vse any corrupt or deceitfull drugs or ingredients in dying of Silkes either into black or colours, wherby the weight of the Silke shall or may be increased in the dying aboue the true nature of the Silke it selfe, and what the best and lightest Die must necessarily adde to make the colour good, firme and beautifull, And that this may be so done and obserued, wee doe hereby will and command the said Gouvernour and Company of Silkemen of London and their successors for the time being, that they from time to time diligently search for, & seize, or cause to be seized, all such Silkes as shall be suspected to be hereafter falsly dyed contrary to the said ordinance and this Our Royall Command, and forthwith to make triall thereof, and if vpon triall thereof made, the same shall be found to exceed the weights and allowances in the said former Proclamation specified, or to be falsly died, though they be vnder that weight, then to cause the same to be burned, and that not onely the Silke may bee burned and destroyed, but the true owner the better found out and punished.

wee do likewise strictly charge & command all our people whatsoever, in any wise vsing any part of the said trade, that they with constant markes, and as neere as they can, differing from other mens, doe marke and distinguish whatsoever goods or wares they shall sell or worke, and that no man doe vse an others marke, wherby his owne fraudes may be hidden, and the innocent brought into trouble or suspicion: And for that wee haue bene likewise by them informed that abuse and wrong may growe to our people by the making gold & siluer thred and oes of false and deceitfull mettalls, stufte and materialls, wee hereby vtterly forbid the same, and doe command the said Gouvernour and Company, that they likewise from time to time make diligent search to discover the same, and cause trialls to be made of all such as they shall suspect, wherby the same may be found out and punished. And to the end that this Our Royall Command herein be not hindered by such who being faulty may oppose themselves against the searches & trialls

from time to time, to bee made by the said Gouvernour and Company, and against other the powers and Authorities granted to them, the said Gouvernour and Company, by Our said Charter.

And to the end their Ordinances may bee the better performed, observed and kept, we doe hereby streightly charge and command all and every Maiors, Sheriffes, Iustices of the Peace, Bailiffes, Constables, Customers, and all other Officers and Ministers whatsoever, to be from time to time in all things, helping, ayding and assisting, to the said Gouvernour and Company, their Officers, and Ministers, and as much as in them, or any of them, whom it shall or may concerne lieth, to see Our pleasure heerein to bee kept, observed, and performed, as they tender Our pleasure, and will answere the contrary at their perils, and vpon such punishments as can or may bee inflicted vpon the offendours, for contempt of Our Royall pleasure in this behalfe.

And we doe hereby streightly charge & command, the said Gouvernour and Company, that they according to the trust reposed in them, by Our said Charter, apply themselves with all diligence, to the finding out of the deceipts and abuses vled in the said Trade, and of the wayes and meanes of reformation of the same, and that they doe goe on to make all such further wholesome Ordinances, for the pzeuenting and punishing of the said abuses as shall be meet.

And lastly, because there may be at this present, diuers quantities of Silke in the hands of many persons, which was dyed according to the former Proclamation, and before the said Ordinance made and published as aforesaid, which cannot be knowne vpon their searches, from that which hath been dyed since, Whereby (if all should be taken and burned) the lust may suffer with the vntust. we doe therefore hereby streightly charge and command, that all Silke, short skaynes, or other wise heretofore dyed into any of the same nine colours, be bented or transported out of our Kingdome, or otherwise boyled off, and discharged of the said die, before Midsummer-day next; And if after that day any such false, or deceitfull dyed Silke, either already so dyed, or hereafter to be dyed, contrary to the said Ordinance, and this Our Royall command, shall be found in the hand of any person whatsoever, besides the punishments aforesaid, the Silke it selfe wheresoener the same shall be found shall be burned and viterly destroyed.

Given at our Court at New-market, the sixteenth day of March, in the seuenth yeere of our Reigne of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland,

God saue the King.



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